

Preliminary Amendment
Appln. No.: National Stage of PCT/JP2004/009212
Attorney Docket No. Q92060

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1. (original): A composition comprising at least one microorganism selected from the group consisting of lactic acid bacterial and yeast strains that have an ability to decompose purines and an action of lowering serum uric acid level.

2. (original): A composition according to Claim 1, wherein the composition is a serum uric acid level-lowering composition.

3. (original): A composition according to Claim 1, wherein the composition is in the form of a food or beverage.

4. (original): A composition according to Claim 3, wherein the composition is a fermented milk, a lactic acid bacteria beverage, a fermented vegetable beverage, a fermented fruit beverage, or a fermented soymilk.

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5. (original): A composition according to Claim 1, wherein the composition is a pharmaceutical composition.

6. (original): A composition according to Claim 1, wherein the microorganism is a lactic acid bacterial strain belonging to the genus *Lactobacillus*.

7. (original): A composition according to Claim 6, wherein the lactic acid bacterial strain is one member selected from the group consisting of *Lactobacillus* ONRIC b0185 (FERM BP-10004), *Lactobacillus* ONRIC b0193 (FERM BP-10005), *Lactobacillus* ONRIC b0195 (FERM BP-10006) and *Lactobacillus* ONRIC b0223 (FERM BP-10007).

8. (original): A composition according to Claim 1, wherein the microorganism is a yeast strain belonging to the genus *Saccharomyces*.

9. (original): A composition according to Claim 8, wherein the yeast strain is *Saccharomyces* ONRIC y0046 (FERM BP-10008).

10. (original): A lactic acid bacterial strain belonging to the genus *Lactobacillus* having an ability to decompose purines and an action of lowering serum uric acid level.

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11. (original): A lactic acid bacterial strain according to Claim 10, wherein the strain is *Lactobacillus* ONRIC b0185 (FERM BP-10004), *Lactobacillus* ONRIC b0193 (FERM BP-10005), *Lactobacillus* ONRIC b0195 (FERM BP-10006) or *Lactobacillus* ONRIC b0223 (FERM BP-10007).

12. (original): A yeast strain belonging to the genus *Saccharomyces* that has an ability to decompose purines and an action of lowering serum uric acid level.

13. (original): A yeast strain according to Claim 12, wherein the strain is *Saccharomyces* ONRIC y0046 (FERM BP-10008).

14. (original): A method for lowering a serum uric acid level comprising administering the composition defined in Claim 1 to a patient in need of a serum uric acid level lowering treatment.

15. (original): A method for lowering a serum uric acid level comprising administering the lactic acid bacterial strain defined in Claim 10 to a patient in need of a serum uric acid level lowering treatment.

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16. (original): A method for lowering a serum uric acid level comprising administering the yeast strain defined in Claim 12 to a patient in need of a serum uric acid level lowering treatment.

17. - 19. (canceled)